

JAMES PATTERSON

# MAX RIDE

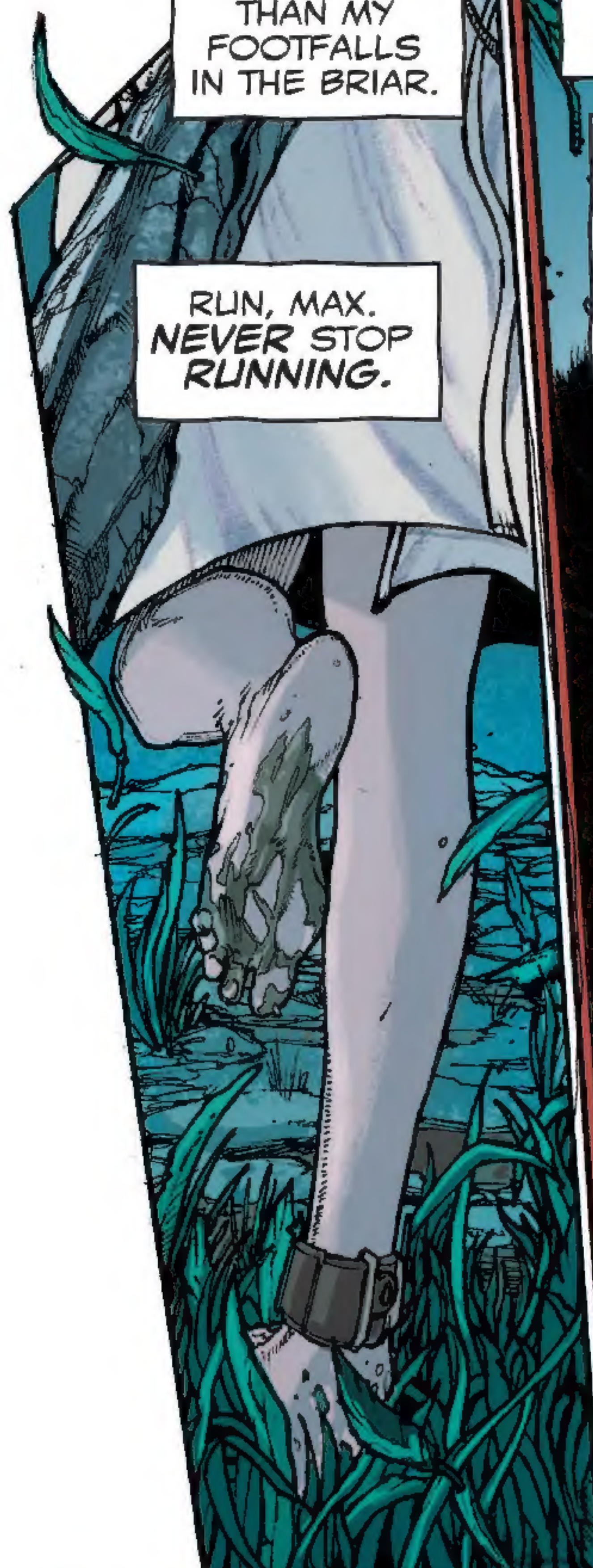
FIRST FLIGHT

BENNETT  
SANCHEZ  
SANZ

**MARVEL**

001





I HEAR MY  
HEART BEATS  
LIKE THUNDER.

THE SOUND  
OF MY PULSE  
IS HARDER,  
LOUDER  
THAN MY  
FOOTFALLS  
IN THE BRIAR.

RUN, MAX.  
NEVER STOP  
RUNNING.

IN THE  
DARKNESS, I  
CAN SEE THE  
**ERASERS**  
RIPPING  
THROUGH  
THE LOAM.

HALF-HUMAN,  
HALF-MONSTER,  
ALL **BLOOD-  
THIRSTY**,  
THEY'RE ON  
THE HUNT.

KEEP RUNNING, MAX.  
LEAVE **THE SCHOOL** BEHIND...



CLAWS AS SHARP AS SPLINTERED BONE, THEIR  
VOICES HOARSE AND EAGER--I CAN **SMELL** THE  
BLOOD ON THEIR BREATH, ALMOST TASTE THE  
VENOM ON THEIR TONGUES AS THEY GET CLOSER.

UNTIL--

I TOUCH THE  
PLACE WHERE MY  
LUCK RUNS OUT.

EVERY SENSE  
TELLS ME I'M  
ABOUT TO DIE.

I'M  
FALLING--

AND  
THEN--







I FLY.

ONE MORE  
DAY, MAX.

YOU'RE NOT  
DEAD YET.



MARVEL COMICS AND JAMES PATTERSON  
PROUDLY PRESENT



# MAX RIDE

FIRST FLIGHT

ADAPTED FROM THE NOVEL, *MAXIMUM RIDE*, BY JAMES PATTERSON

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NOW.

~HUNH!~

A DREAM,  
I'M SAFE--  
I'M HOME.

NO ONE'S  
CHASING  
ME. NO  
ONE'S COMING  
TO TAKE  
ME BACK TO  
THAT--LAB.

BACK TO  
THAT "SCHOOL"  
WHERE MY FAMILY  
AND I WERE  
CREATED.

JEB BATCHELDER  
WAS A SCIENTIST  
THERE.

FOUR YEARS  
AGO, HE **STOLE**  
US. **RESCUED**  
US. **HID** US.

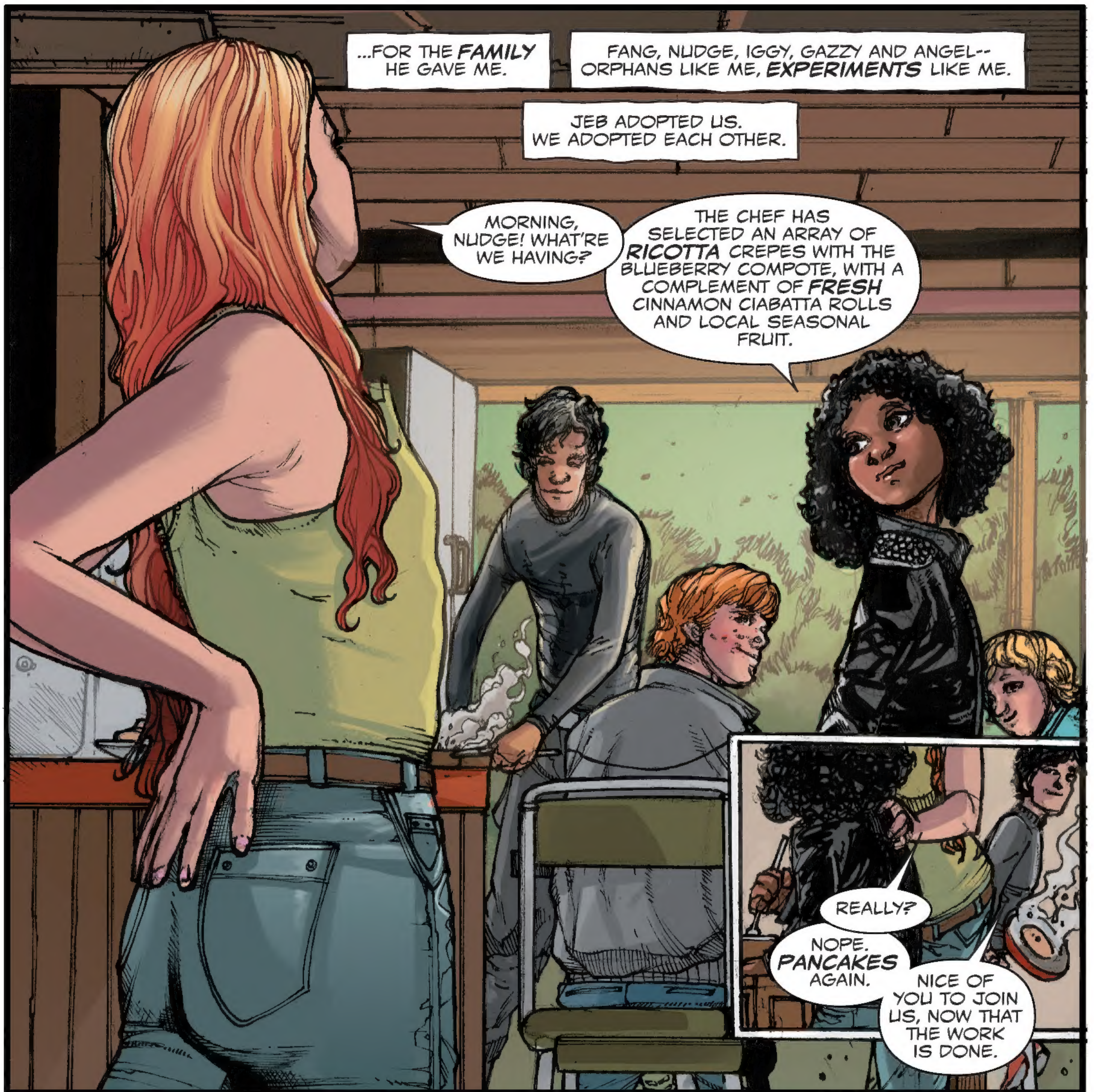
TAUGHT US  
EVERYTHING WE  
KNOW, FROM SELF-  
DEFENSE TO **IDENTITY**  
**THEFT** TO HOW TO  
BAKE REALLY  
GREAT CHOCOLATE-  
CHIP COOKIES.

WE BURIED HIM  
A YEAR AGO.

AND I MISS  
HIM LIKE HELL.

BUT I AM  
SO GRATEFUL...





...FOR THE **FAMILY** HE GAVE ME.

FANG, NUDGE, IGGY, GAZZY AND ANGEL-- ORPHANS LIKE ME, **EXPERIMENTS** LIKE ME.

JEB ADOPTED US.  
WE ADOPTED EACH OTHER.

MORNING, NUDGE! WHAT'RE WE HAVING?

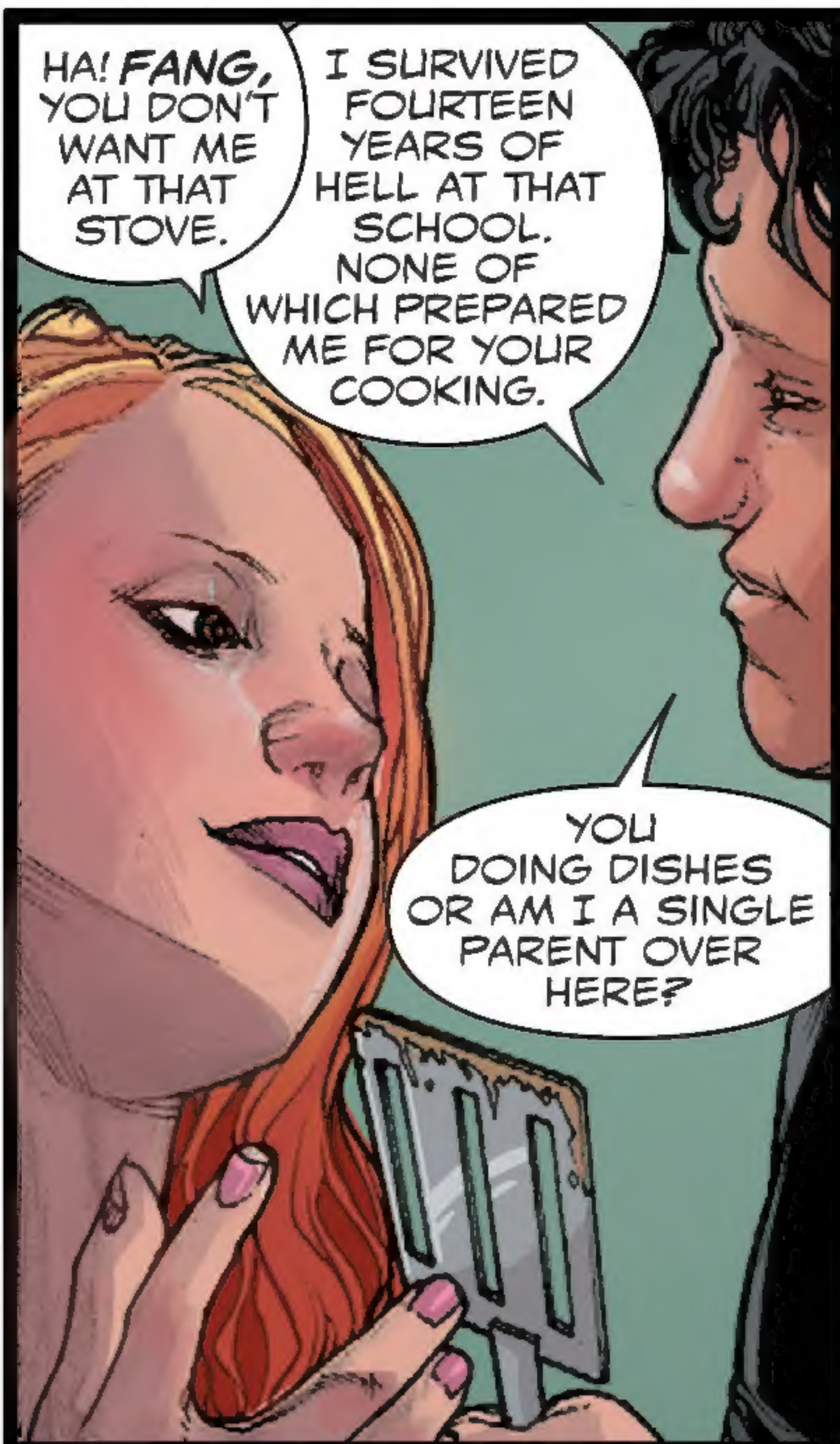
THE CHEF HAS SELECTED AN ARRAY OF **RICOTTA** CREPES WITH THE BLUEBERRY COMPOTE, WITH A COMPLEMENT OF **FRESH** CINNAMON CIABATTA ROLLS AND LOCAL SEASONAL FRUIT.



REALLY?

NOPE. **PANCAKES** AGAIN.

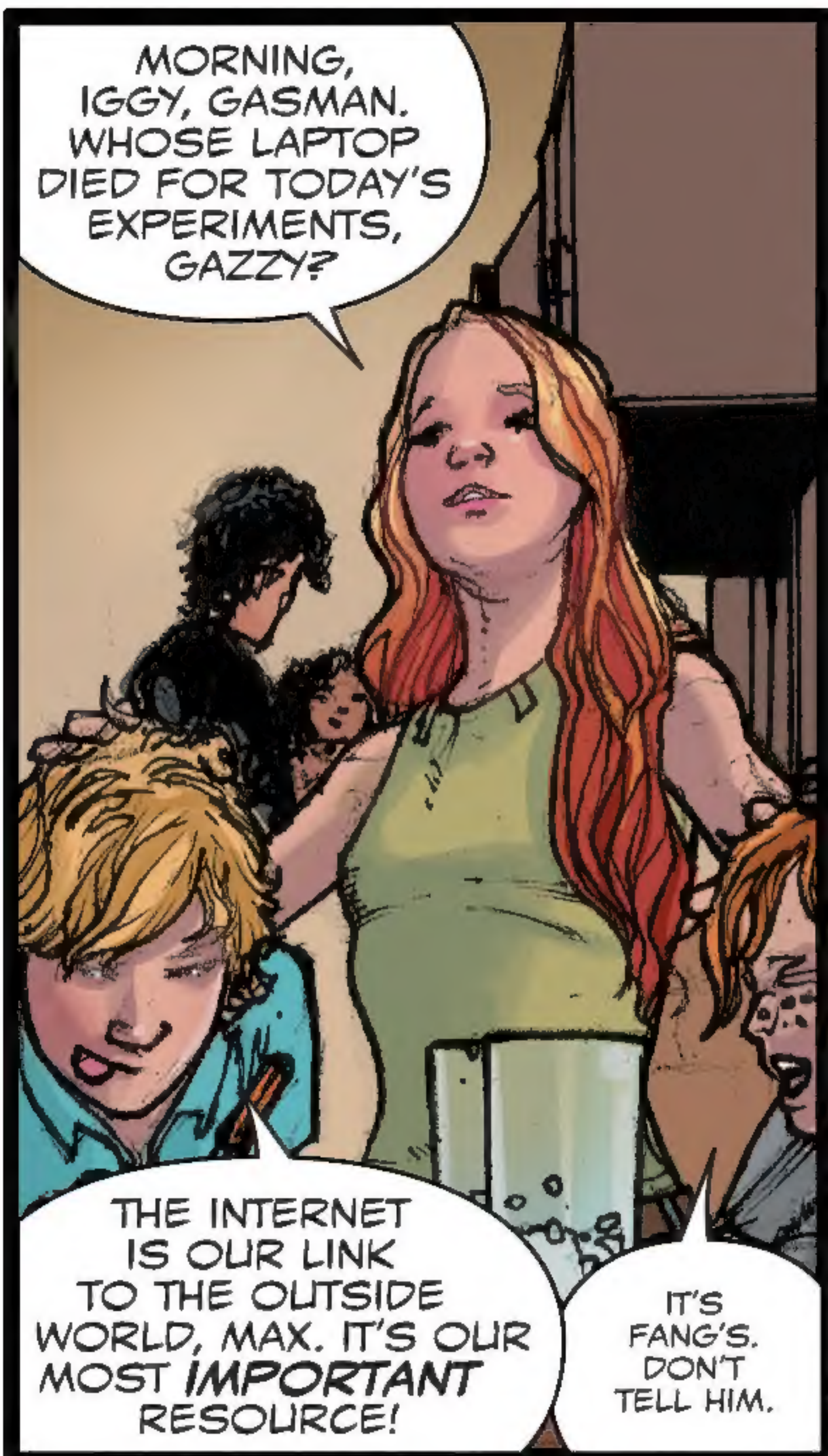
NICE OF YOU TO JOIN US, NOW THAT THE WORK IS DONE.



HA! **FANG**, YOU DON'T WANT ME AT THAT STOVE.

I SURVIVED FOURTEEN YEARS OF HELL AT THAT SCHOOL. NONE OF WHICH PREPARED ME FOR YOUR COOKING.

YOU DOING DISHES OR AM I A SINGLE PARENT OVER HERE?



MORNING, IGGY, GASMAN. WHOSE LAPTOP DIED FOR TODAY'S EXPERIMENTS, GAZZY?

THE INTERNET IS OUR LINK TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD, MAX. IT'S OUR MOST **IMPORTANT** RESOURCE!

IT'S **FANG'S**. DON'T TELL HIM.

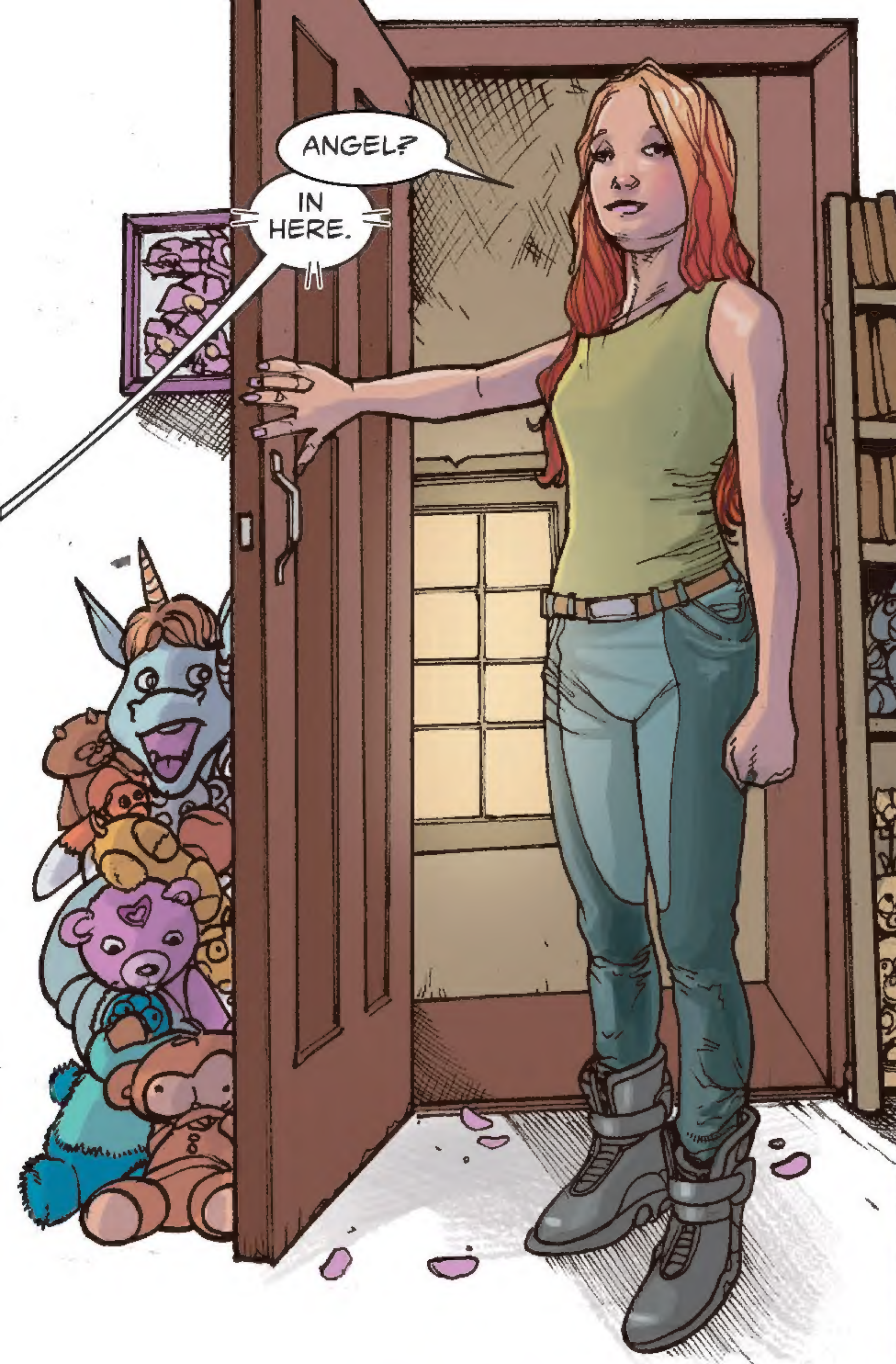


HEY!

I COUNT FIVE OF US...WE ARE MISSING ONE BOTTOMLESS PIT. WHERE'S ANGEL...?

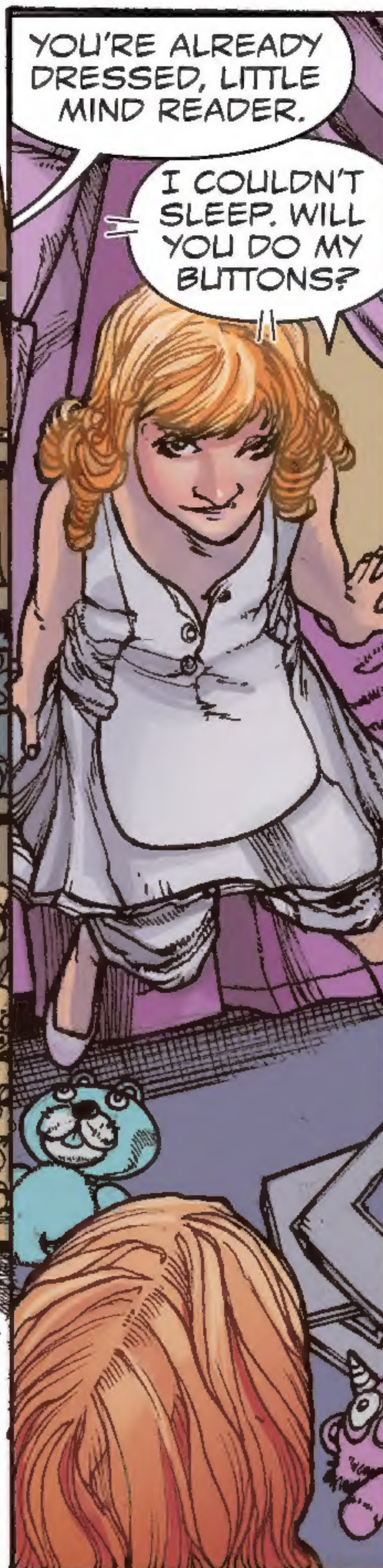
I'LL GET HER!





ANGEL?

IN  
HERE.



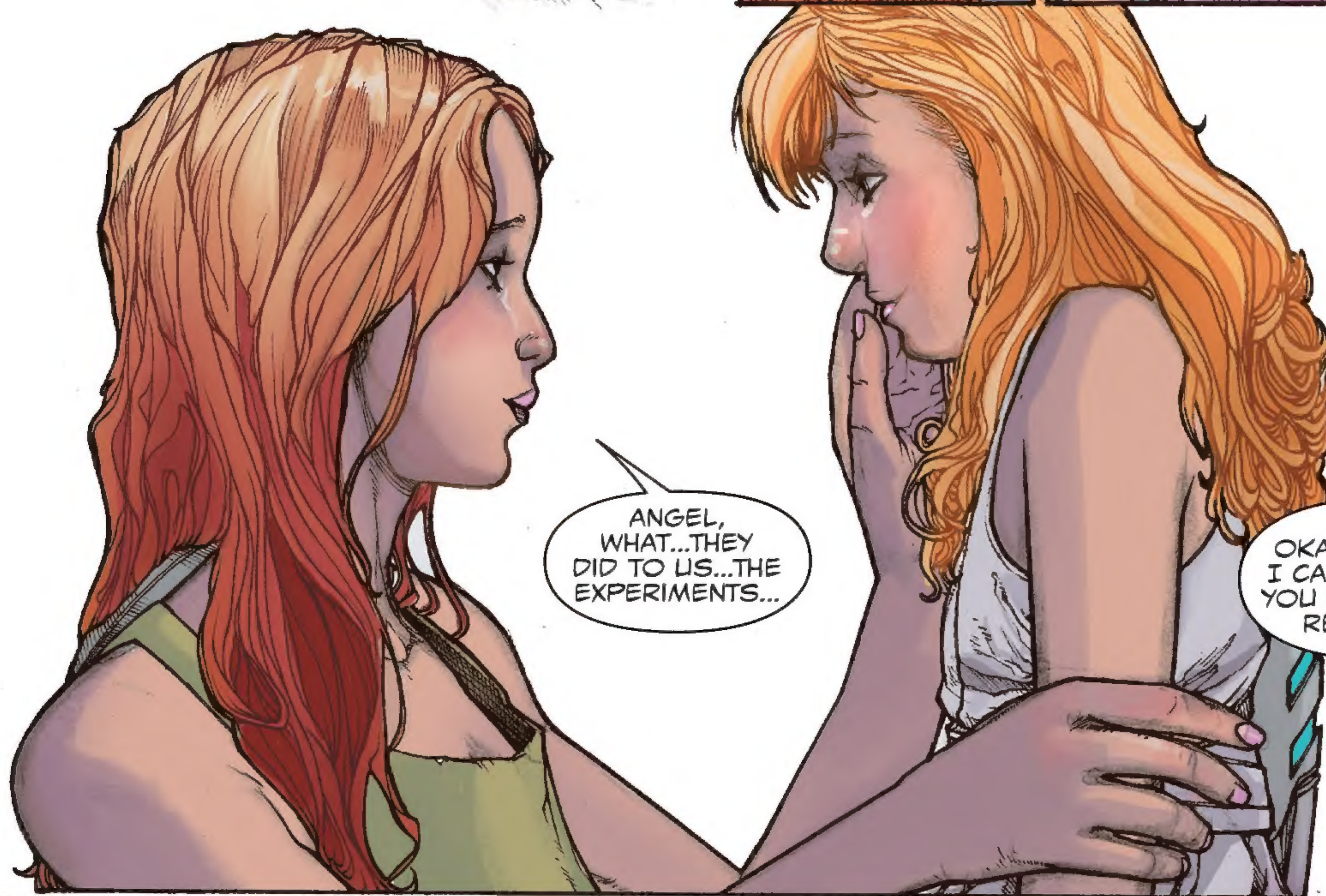
YOU'RE ALREADY  
DRESSED, LITTLE  
MIND READER.

I COULDN'T  
SLEEP. WILL  
YOU DO MY  
BUTTONS?



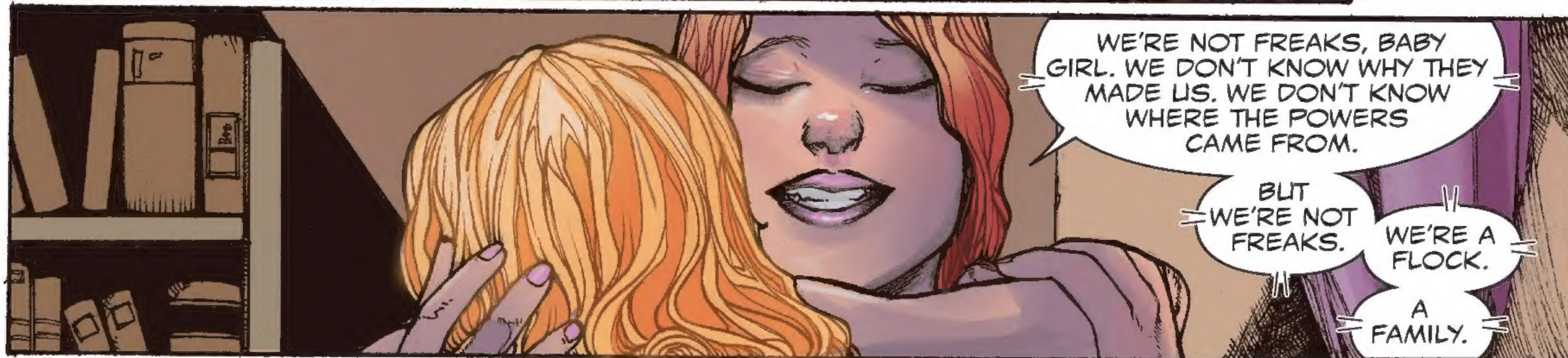
BAD  
DREAMS?

THE NIGHT  
JEB HELPED US  
ESCAPE FROM  
THE SCHOOL.



ANGEL,  
WHAT...THEY  
DID TO US...THE  
EXPERIMENTS...

IT'S  
OKAY, MAXIMUM.  
I CAN HEAR WHAT  
YOU WANT TO SAY,  
REMEMBER?



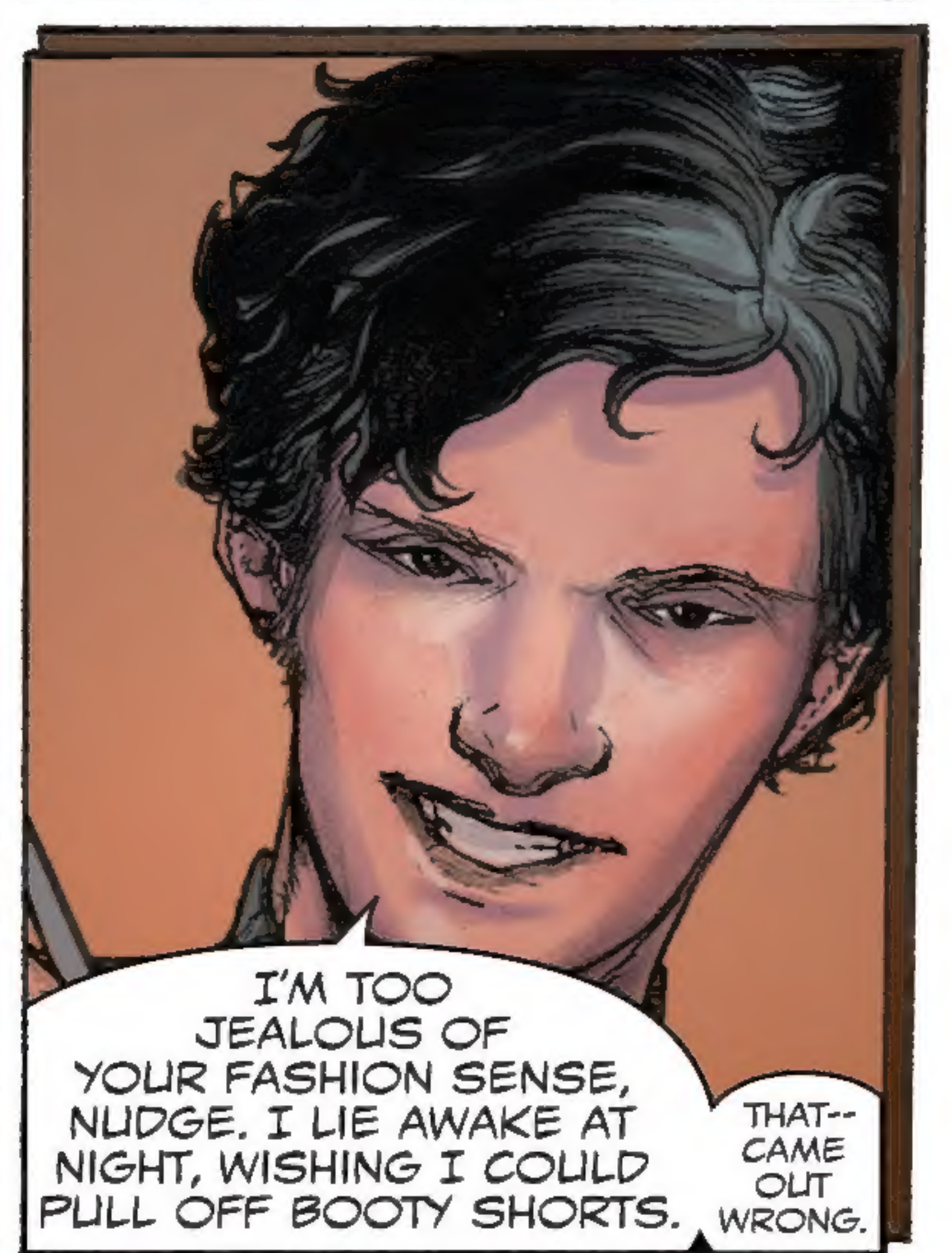
WE'RE NOT FREAKS, BABY  
GIRL. WE DON'T KNOW WHY THEY  
MADE US. WE DON'T KNOW  
WHERE THE POWERS  
CAME FROM.

BUT  
WE'RE NOT  
FREAKS.

WE'RE A  
FLOCK.

A  
FAMILY.







--EVERYTHING  
CAN CHANGE.

CRSSSSSH







WINGS  
OUT! GO  
GO GO!

THE  
ERASERS!  
THEY'VE  
FOUND US!



AT THE SCHOOL,  
THESE MONSTERS  
WERE SECURITY,  
LACKEYS,  
BLOODHOUNDS--

--AND  
EXECUTIONERS.



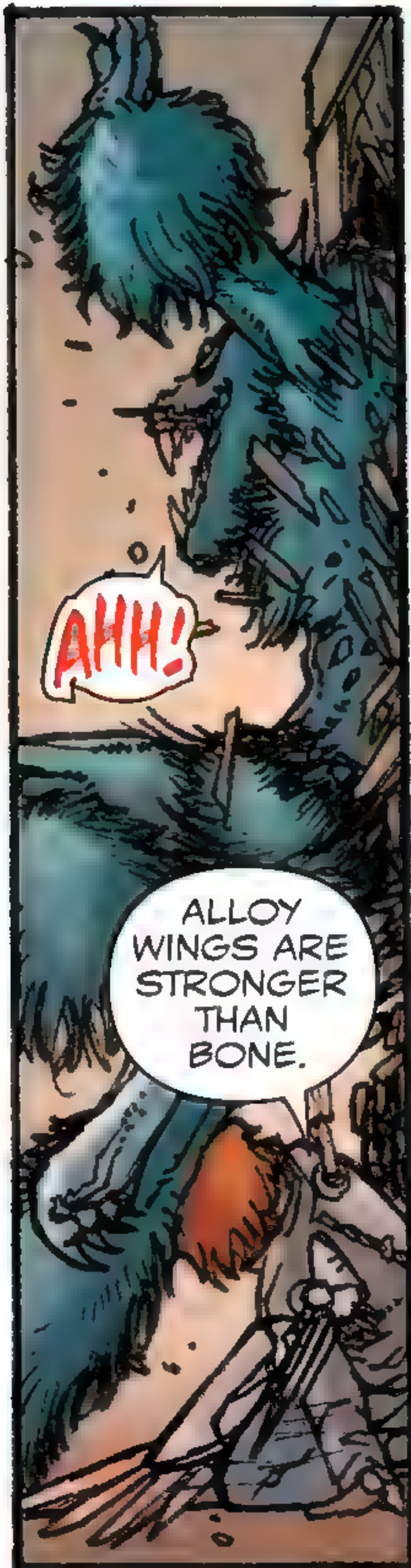
BUT THE  
ONE WE  
FEARED  
ABOVE  
ALL THE  
REST...



ARI,  
LET HER  
GO!

OH,  
MAXIMUM.  
YA DONE  
SCREWED  
UP.

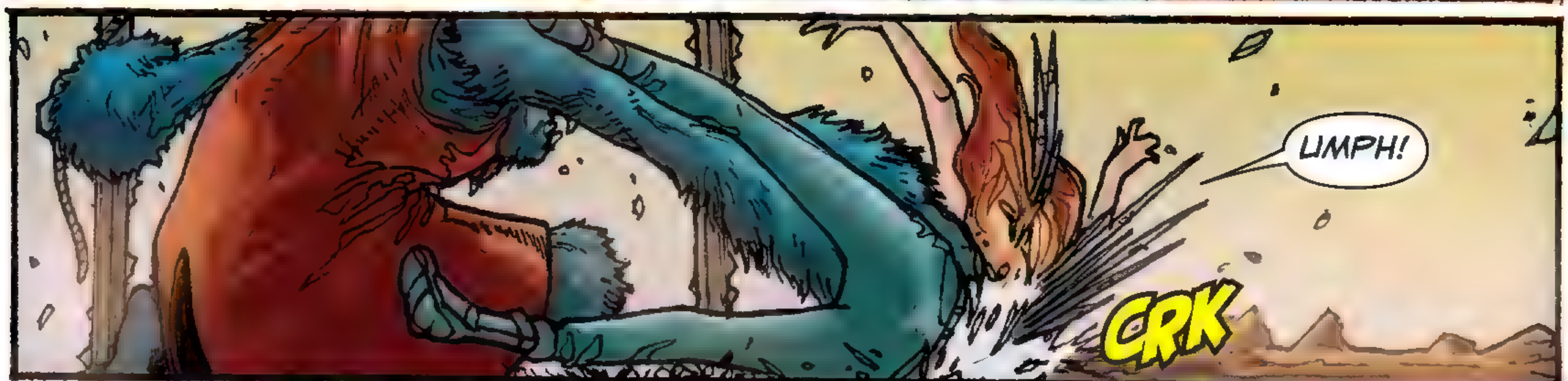




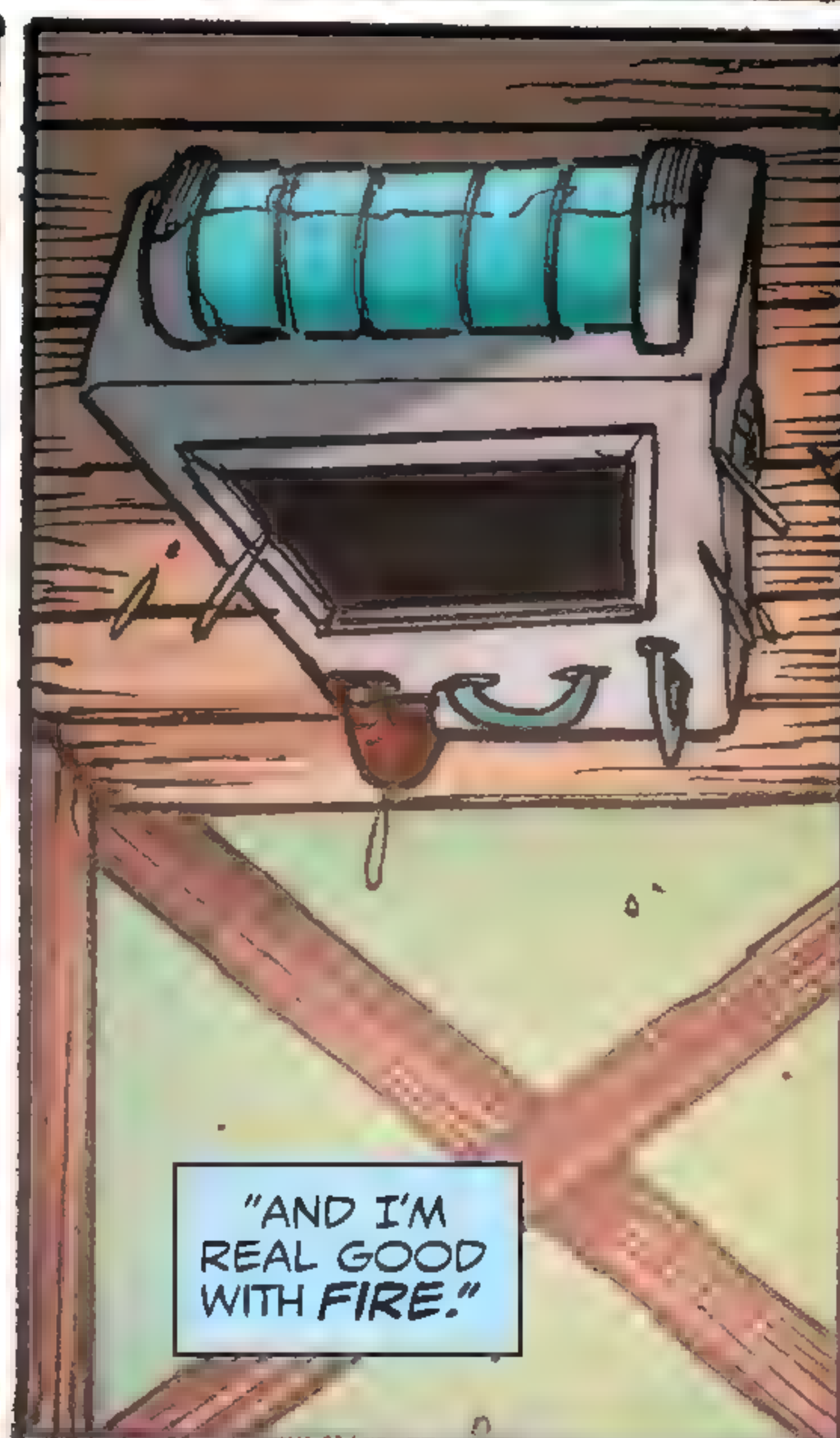
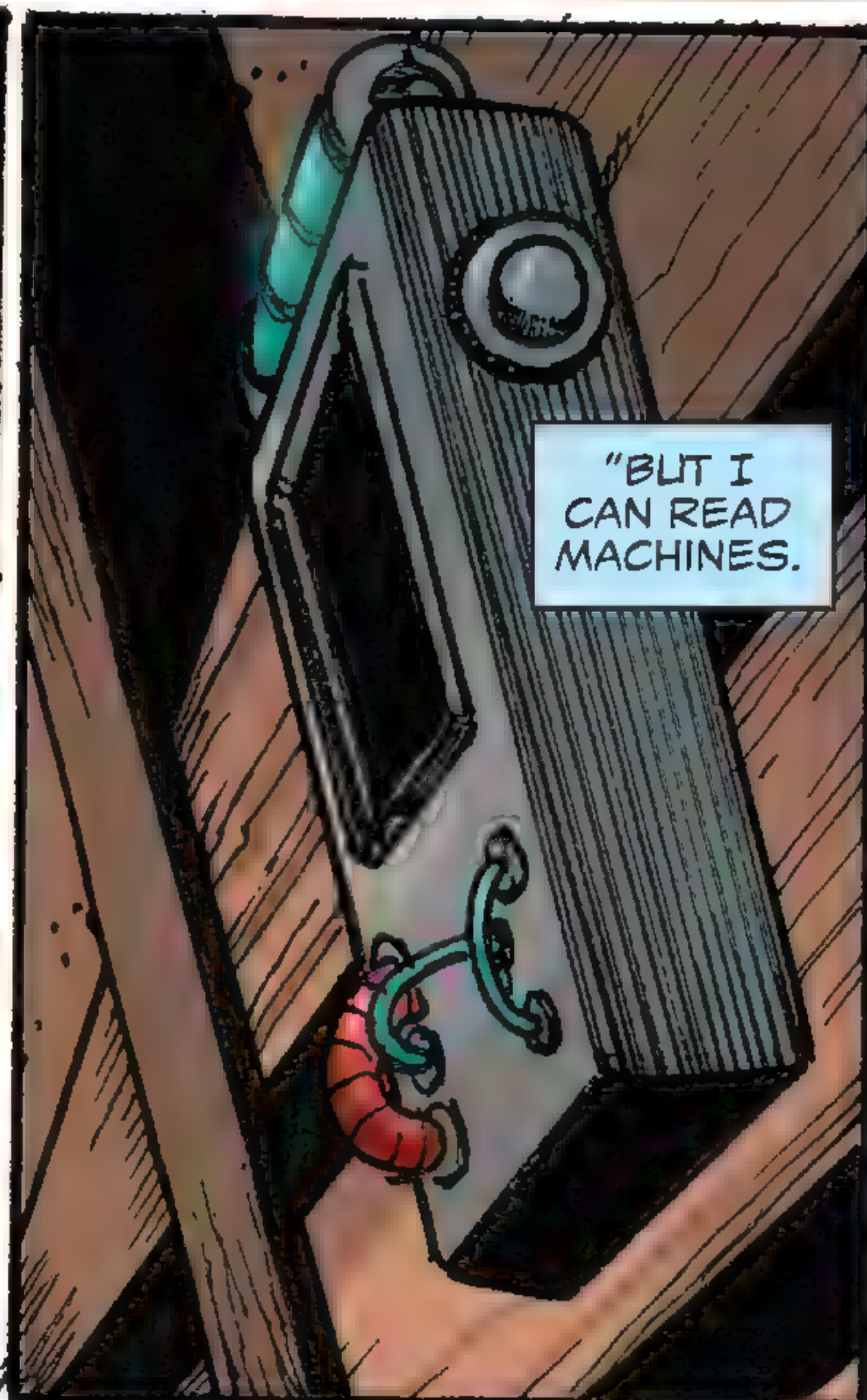








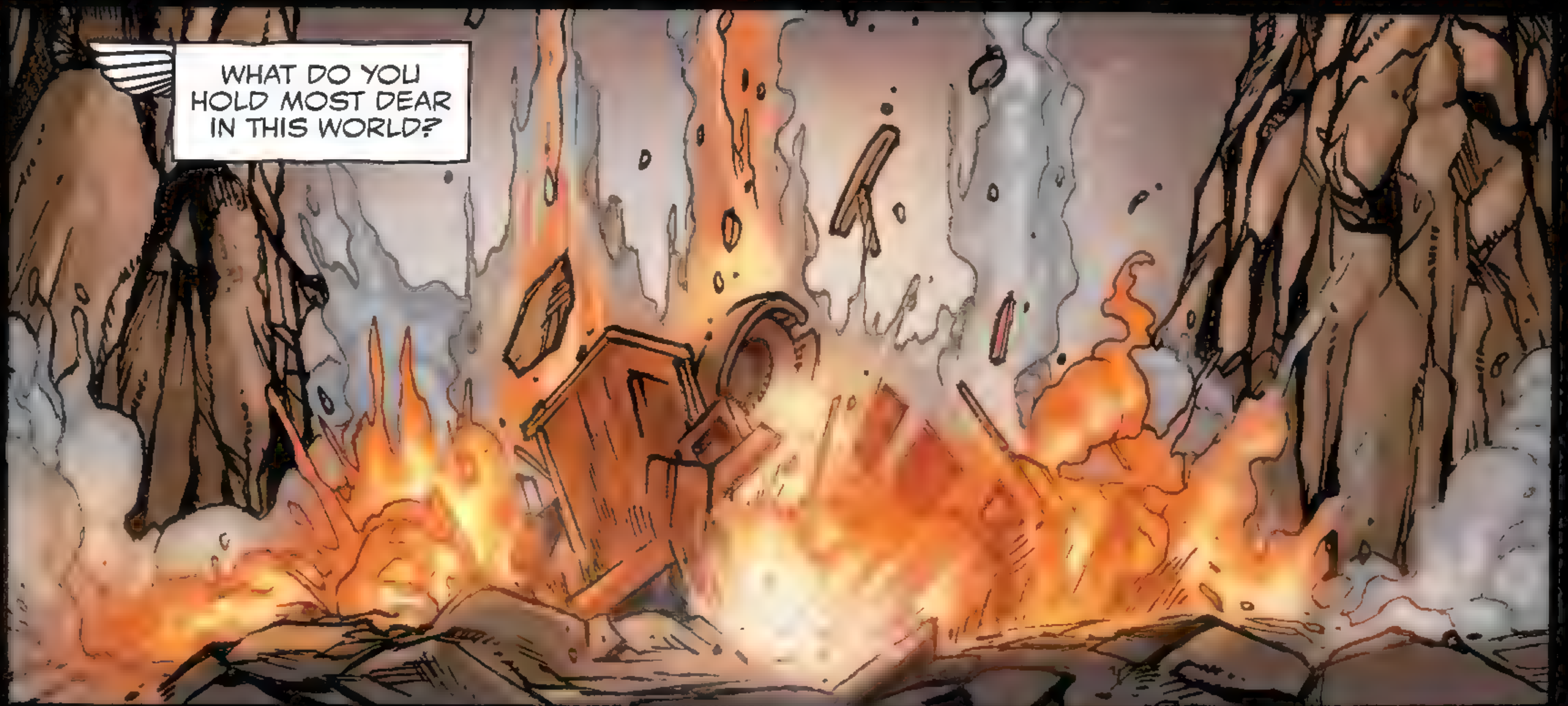




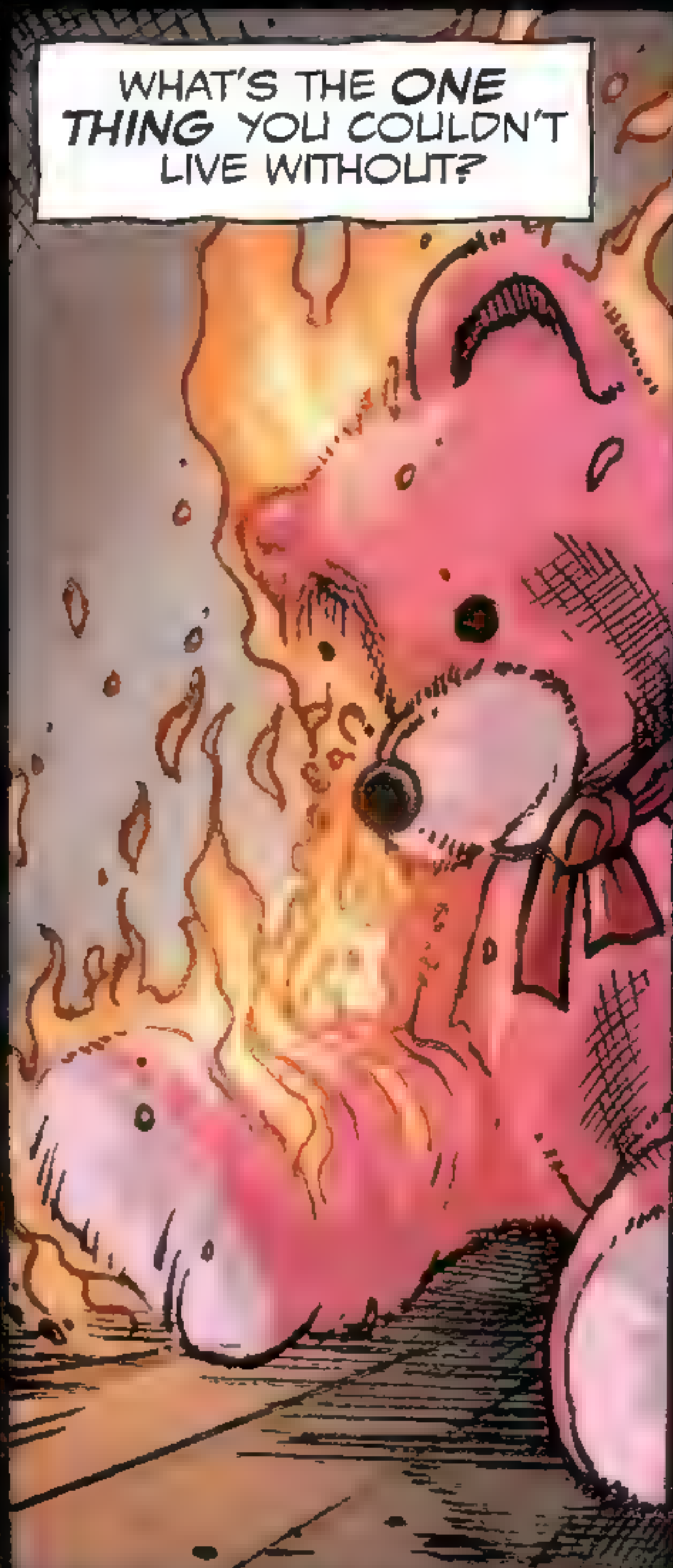




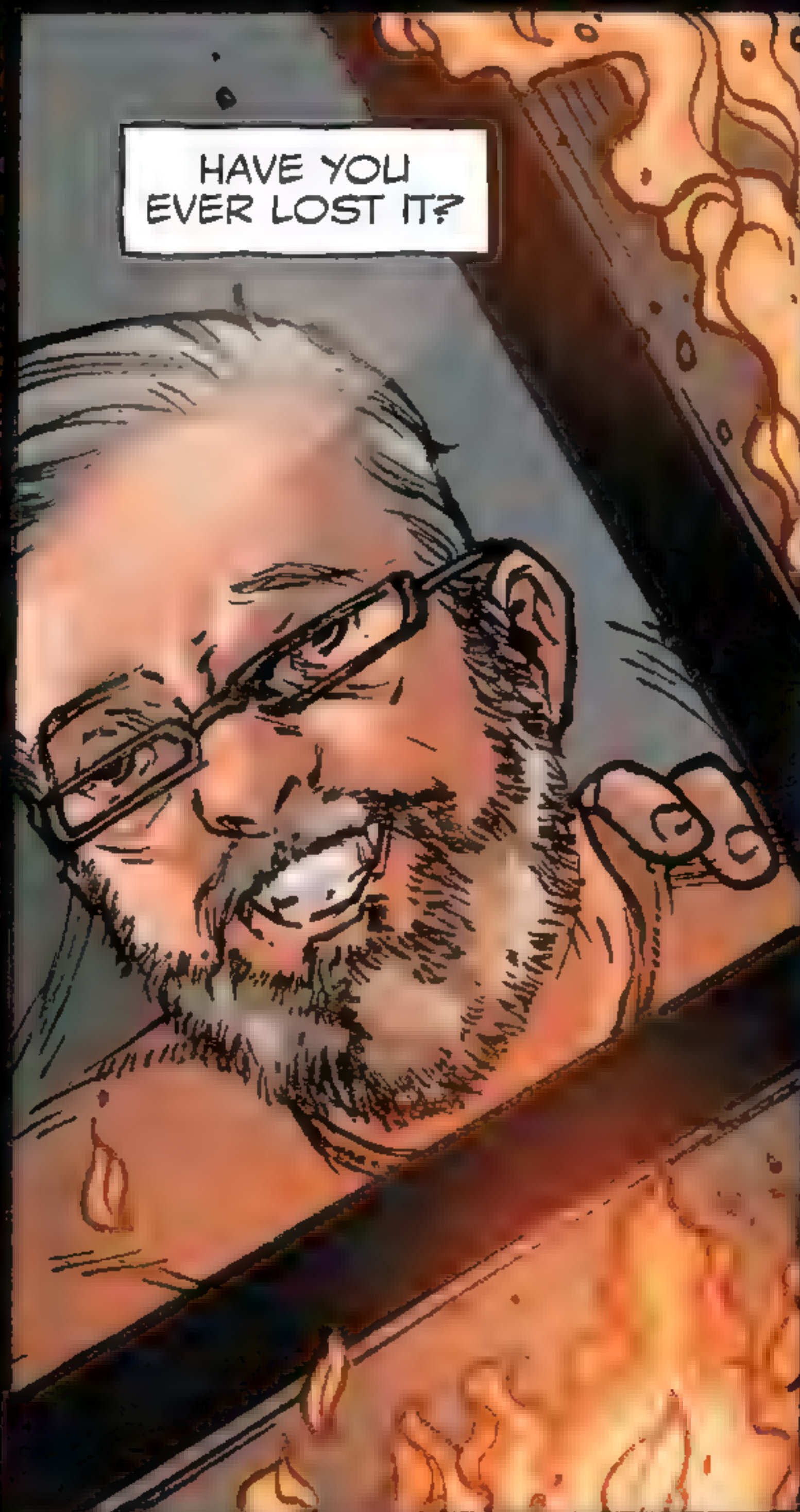




WHAT DO YOU  
HOLD MOST DEAR  
IN THIS WORLD?



WHAT'S THE **ONE**  
**THING** YOU COULDN'T  
LIVE WITHOUT?



HAVE YOU  
EVER LOST IT?




WHEN YOU DID,  
WERE YOU SURPRISED  
YOU WERE ABLE TO  
KEEP GOING?



**RAAAAARG!**

OR DID YOU BURN  
UP, BURN OUT, WITHOUT  
IT TO SUSTAIN YOU?





NO MATTER  
WHAT HAPPENS--

WE CANNOT  
LOSE ANGEL.

I CANNOT  
LOSE ANGEL.

SO WE'RE  
HEADING SOUTH--  
HEADING FOR THE  
SCHOOL, WHERE  
THE ERASERS  
HAVE TAKEN HER.

WE ARE  
A FAMILY.

AND I SWEAR,  
BY EVERY SENSE  
AND EVERY POWER  
THAT I HAVE--

WE WILL  
GET HER  
BACK.



HOURS LATER, DOWN SOUTH.

HOW FAR ARE WE, IGGY?

WE'VE ALL GOT OUR SKILLS, COURTESY OF THE GENE SPLICING. I'D GET LOST IN THE CORNER OF A ROUND ROOM, BUT IGGY'S A HUMAN COMPASS.

WE'RE DEFINITELY IN CALIFORNIA. I'M GUESSING NOT FAR FROM LAKE TAHOE.

WE'RE GOING TO NEED TO EAT SOON. OUR METABOLISMS ARE TOO HIGH TO SUSTAIN THIS MUCH ACTIVITY WITHOUT THE NUTRIENTS TO MATCH.

I'LL GO FOR SUPPLIES.

BE CAREFUL, MAX.

I'M PRETTY SURE I'M THE APEX PREDATOR AROUND HERE.

UMM, DID YOU SEE WHAT FLEW INTO OUR HOUSE?

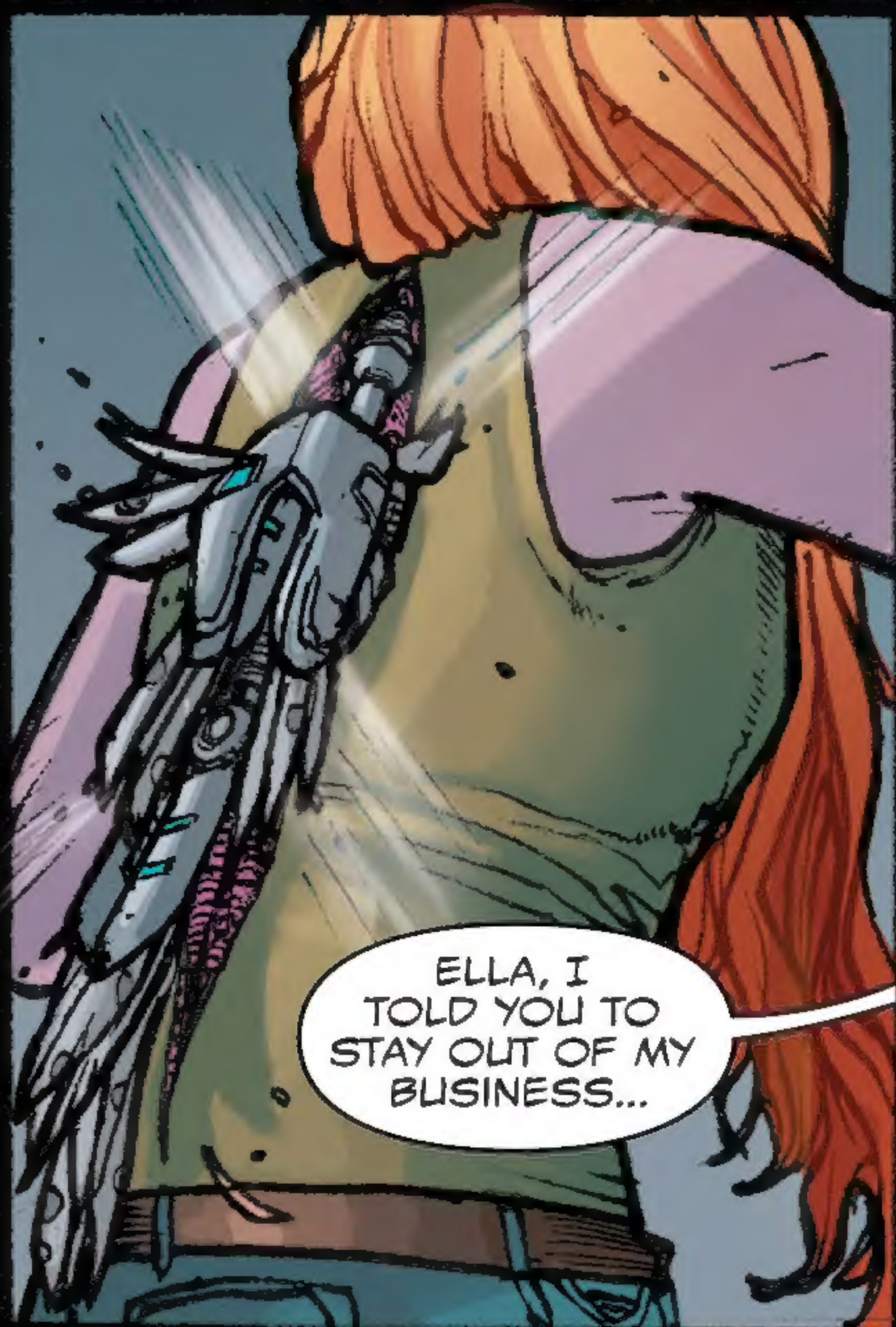
RUDE.

HURRY BACK, MAX. WE'LL BE WAITING.

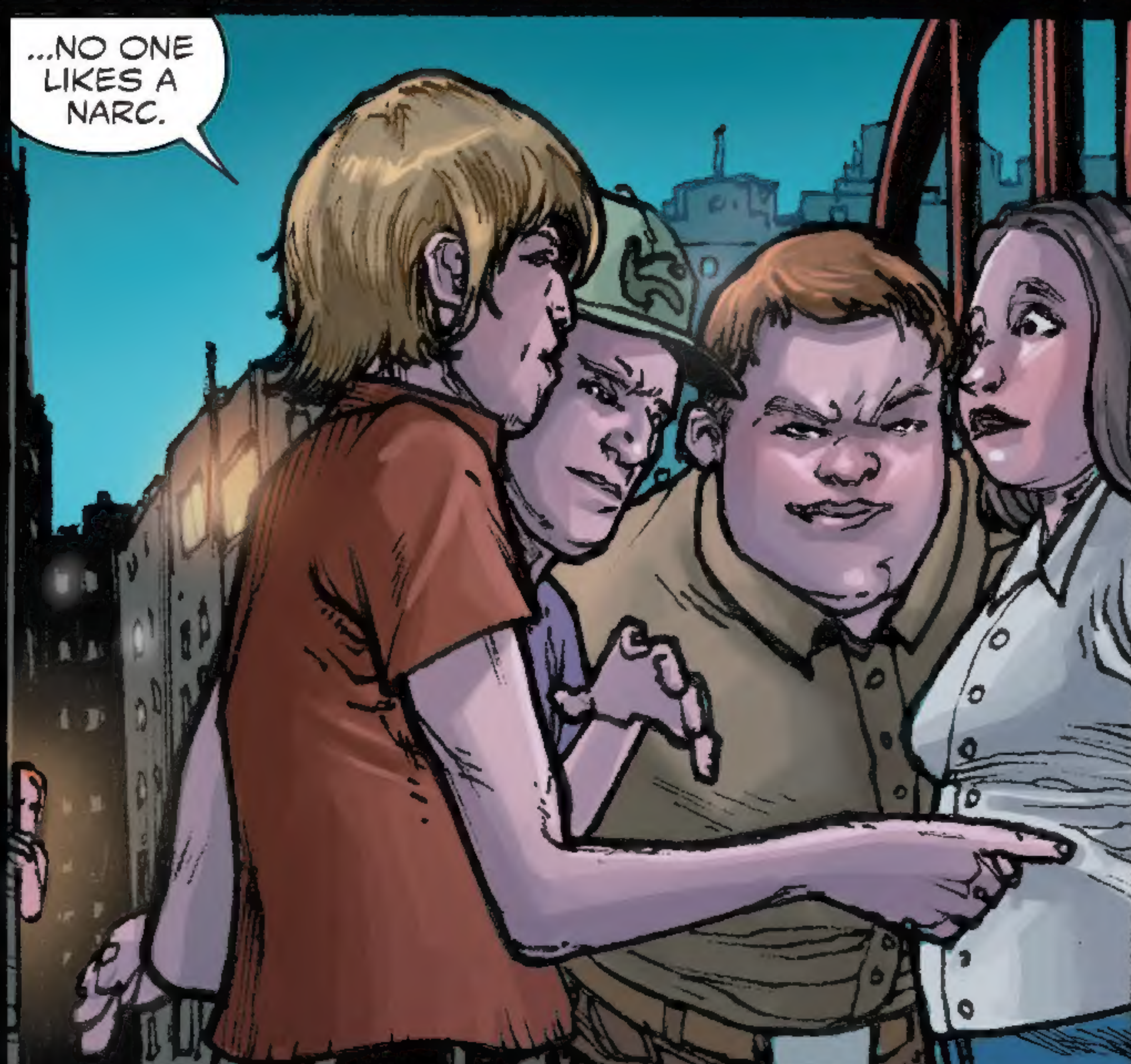




I DON'T LIKE STOWING MY WINGS IN THE HOLLOWES ALONG MY SPINE, BUT I CAN'T RISK THEM BEING SEEN.



ELLA, I TOLD YOU TO STAY OUT OF MY BUSINESS...



...NO ONE LIKES A NARC.



EVEN THOUGH I KNOW IT'S **STUPID**, AND EVEN THOUGH I KNOW IT'S DANGEROUS...



...ALL I SEE ARE ARI AND HIS ERASERS WITH MY ANGEL...

AND I HATE BULLIES.





GET AWAY FROM HER.

WHO'S THIS PRETTY PIECE GIVING ORDERS?

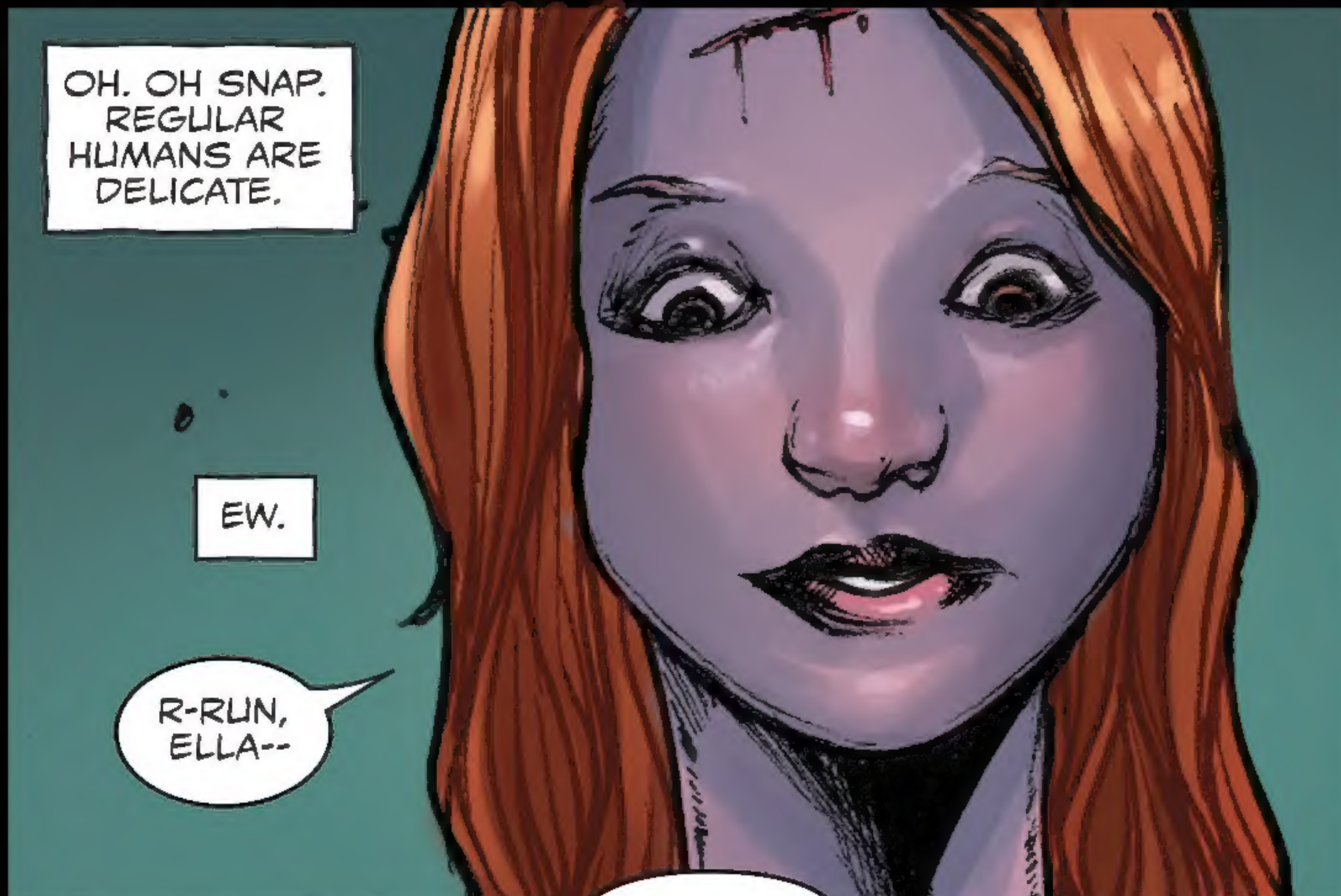


YOU CAN LEAVE NOW, OR YOU CAN TELL THE COPS HOW A TEENAGE GIRL WRECKED YOU. WITH HER BARE HANDS.

I AIN'T GOT THE TIME FOR THIS, SWEETHEART-- ORTIZ, GRAB ELLA AND THIS--



SNAKT



OH. OH SNAP. REGULAR HUMANS ARE DELICATE.

EW.

R-RUN, ELLA--

RUN!!



YOU'RE GONNA REGRET THAT, FREAK.

SUDDENLY... I THINK OF MY DREAM.



**BLAM**

AND THEN  
I'M NOT  
FLYING.

I'M  
FALLING.

TO BE CONTINUED...



